



Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services

Maryland Parole Commission

6776 REISTERSTOWN ROAD • SUITE 307 • BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21215-2343
(410) 585-3200 • FAX (410) 764-4355 • TOLL FREE (877) 241-5428 • www.dpscs.state.md.us/mpc

STATE OF MARYLAND

July 3, 2006

ROBERT L. EHRLICH, JR.
GOVERNOR

MICHAEL S. STEELE
LT. GOVERNOR

MARY ANN SAAR
SECRETARY

G. LAWRENCE FRANKLIN
DEPUTY SECRETARY

MARY L. LIVERS, Ph.D.
DEPUTY SECRETARY

DAVID R. BLUMBERG
CHAIRMAN

MARTHA S. KLIMA
VICE- CHAIR

The Honorable James E. DeGrange, Sr.
Chair, Senate Public Safety, Transportation and Environment Subcommittee
Room 120, James Senate Office Building
110 College Avenue
Annapolis, Maryland 21401-1991

RE: Response to the Legislative Analyst's Report

Dear Senator DeGrange:

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the analysis of the Commission's FY 2007 budget provided by Ms. Keri Beth Cain. The following will address the specific issues that Ms. Cain indicated in her report to the Committee.

Performance Analysis – Managing for Results: The commission should be prepared to discuss the decline in the number of retake warrants transmitted, and what steps it is taking to meet its goal of 35% or greater in fiscal 2006 and beyond.

Response:

Retake warrants are issued through the Post-Release Unit of the Maryland Parole Commission. The decline in the number of warrants transmitted is directly attributed to ongoing staff shortages. In the interim, the Commission has been working toward the implementation of an "electronic" warrant, which the Commission began to utilize on December 5, 2005. Even though there are still some technical issues that still need to be worked out, it is expected that by the end of this fiscal year, there should be a significant increase in the number of warrants processed daily. In the interim, the Commission has resorted to alternative methods of having the warrants processed expeditiously in which staff from other units within the agency are mandated to pitch in to assist when needed. This is an important objective and supervisors are monitoring the warrants closely; the team concept is being emphasized to keep the unit on target.

Issue: The commission should be prepared to discuss the measures it is taking to fulfill the objective of holding at least 40% of revocation hearings within 30 days of return to DOC custody

Response:

In order to increase the number of revocation hearings for alleged technical rules violators, the Commission has increased the number of LAW (Liaison Agent/ Waiver)

hearings conducted each week from 3-4 dockets per week (36-48 cases heard) to 5-6 dockets per week (60-72 cases heard).

It should be noted that based on the first quarter (MFR) Managing for Results statistical projection for FY 2006, 76% of the parole violators will have had a revocation hearing within 30 days. Although the goal of conducting 40% of the revocation hearings within the 30-day time frame has not been met previously, over 50% of the hearings were conducted between 32-35 days of the return to Division of Correction custody.

Recommended Actions:

1. Delete two new positions.

Response:

The commission requested two new Office Clerk positions for the following reasons:

Release Unit

There are currently over 1,000 cases held within this unit awaiting completion of paperwork processing. Of that number, approximately 300 are for February and prior parole release dates. There has been an ongoing backlog of work for the Release Unit that requires additional staff to handle the workload. The consequences of not approving these positions include the following:

- Inmates may not receive a timely release; this will impact those inmates who have conditions of release, such as attending treatment and other programs;
- Lack of timely release will also have a fiscal impact on the Division of Correction for each day an inmate remains incarcerated beyond the inmate's release date;
- Those inmate releases that require victim notification will be delayed since there is a requirement to give a minimum of a fifteen (15) day notice to victims prior to the release of the inmate.

Warrant (Post Release) Unit

This unit is responsible for processing all parole retake warrants and subpoenas for the State of Maryland. In FY 2005, this unit processed 4,797 warrants and recalls, and 424 subpoenas. It is estimated that in FY 2006, those numbers will increase by 10%. At this present time, there are over 200 cases with outstanding parole retake warrants that need to be processed. Each warrant represents a convicted criminal who was released from prison prior to serving the full term of sentence either on Mandatory Supervision or Parole release order who did not adhere to the conditions of release. Warrants not processed in a timely manner could ultimately result in the offender committing another crime while in the community. Reducing the backlog requires additional permanent staff to handle the workload. Without additional staff, the unit will continue to experience a delay in processing retake warrants and subpoenas.

Additional staff will allow the Commission to take the necessary step to meet its objective for retake warrants transmitted.

2. Adopt the narrative directing the Maryland Parole Commission to report information on the new parole guidelines.

Response:

The Commission concurs with the Analyst's recommendation.

I appreciate the opportunity to provide you with an insight on parole related issues. Let me extend my sincere thanks to you and the Subcommittee for your ongoing interest in and continuing support for the Maryland Parole Commission. I welcome the opportunity to provide additional information and assistance should you have any questions with respect to the issues raised.

Sincerely,

David R. Blumberg
Chairman

DRB: tds

C: Mary Ann Saar, Secretary, DPSCS
G. Lawrence Franklin, Deputy Secretary for Administration, DPSCS
Mary L. Livers, Ph.D., Deputy Secretary for Operations, DPSCS
Edward Cheston, Committee Staff, Senate Budget & Taxation Committee
Robert Berkey, Budget Analyst, DBM
Keri Beth Cain, Policy Analyst, DLS
Rhea L. Harris, Director, Office of Legislative Affairs, DPSCS
Susan Dooley, Director of Financial Services, DPSCS



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The Honorable Joan Cadden
Chair, House Subcommittee on Public Safety and Administration
Room 410B, Lowe House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401-1991

RE: Response to the Legislative Analyst's Report

Dear Delegate Cadden:

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Response:

The commission concurs with the Analyst's recommendation.

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